

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 18-20 are pending in this application. For purposes of expedition, claims 16-17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer in favor of allowance of claims 1-15 and 18-20, as indicated on page 3 of the final Office Action (Paper No. 20040126).

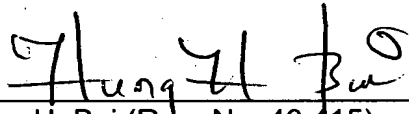
Claims 16 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Koichi, JP 7170723 for reasons stated on page 3 of the final Office Action. While Applicants disagree with the Examiner's assessment of Koichi '723 relative to Applicants' claims 16 and 17, claims 16 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer in the interest of expedition. As a result, entry of the foregoing amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116(b) because those amendments simply respond to the issues raised in the final rejection, no new issues are raised, no further search is required, and the foregoing amendments are believed to remove the basis of the outstanding rejections and to place all claims in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments, arguments and remarks, all claims are deemed to be allowable and this application is believed to be in condition to be passed to issue. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at the Washington DC area office at (703) 312-6600. Applicants respectfully reserve all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any or all previously claimed limitations/features which have been amended or canceled, or to any or all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicants have no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of the disclosed invention to the public.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, No. 01-2135 (Application No. 500.41483X00), and please credit any excess fees to said deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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